

Mr. WELLER. Mr. Chairman, I rise today to give my strong support to H.R. 4733, the Energy and Water Development Appropriations Act of 2001. The legislation supports two important priorities, the restoration of the Kankakee River and the construction of the Tunnel and River Project.

The Energy and Water Development Appropriations Act of 2001 provides resources to continue environmental cleanup and restoration of the Kankakee River, a critical habitat for wildlife and one of Illinois' greatest treasures. For years, the Kankakee River has been choked by sand and sedimentation. This legislation continues the funding of studies to cleanup the River and solve its problems.

Mr. Chairman, I am especially pleased that the Appropriations Committee has provided \$600,000 for the ongoing Army Corps of Engineers Feasibility Study of the Kankakee River and \$300,000 for the State Line Sand Removal Project. The goals of these projects will be to restore the natural hydrology and aquatic habitat back to the river, the removal of excessive sand buildup, the restoration of adjacent wetlands, and the reintroduction of native mussels into their natural habitat. The cleanup and restoration of the Kankakee River deserves high priority; the legislation before us today recognizes the importance of this project.

Additionally, the Committee awarded \$7.8 million for the construction funding for the McCook and Thornton Reservoir projects of the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago. The McCook and Thornton Reservoirs are part of the Chicago Underflow Plan, a comprehensive flood protection and water quality protection plan for the Chicago metropolitan area.

Mr. Chairman, this system has been enormously effective in achieving its goals as evidenced by the elimination of 86 percent of combined sewage pollution in a 325 square mile area. The result of this progress is the dramatic increase in water quality of the Chicagoland waterways and the protection of Lake Michigan, our drinking water source. 131,000 home owners rely on the continued construction of the "Deep Tunnel" flood relief and clean water project. This appropriation will add to the \$30 million already appropriated for flood relief in the South Suburbs and will eventually produce \$104 million in savings and benefits annually.

Mr. Chairman, I commend the hard work of Chairman PACKARD and Chairman YOUNG and urge my colleagues to support this good legislation.

AMENDING INTERNAL REVENUE CODE TO REQUIRE 527 ORGANIZATIONS TO DISCLOSE POLITICAL ACTIVITIES

SPEECH OF

HON. MICHAEL N. CASTLE

OF DELAWARE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 27, 2000

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, tonight the House of Representatives has the opportunity to ensure that meaningful campaign finance

reform is passed in time for this year's election. H.R. 4762 is the campaign finance bill with the best chance to pass both Chambers and be signed into law that has reached the floor in years. Last week, when I testified before the Ways and Means Committee, I said that I would help lead the fight to pass legislation that would rein in the section 527 groups if the House could not pass more comprehensive disclosure legislation. I will do so tonight. In this case, we cannot afford to make the perfect the enemy of the good.

Section 527 organizations, set up under section 527 of the Tax Code, are established to engage in political activities, which influence our political process by funding election-related communications without having to disclose their donors. H.R. 4762 is needed because current campaign laws are wholly unable to adequately regulate the torrent of political advertising by groups exploiting this loophole in both our tax and election laws. Huge sums of money are being spent to influence the election system. While spending by individuals has been protected by Supreme Court rulings and the problem of soft money continues because a lack of will by Congress to address it, we now have a troubling new trend in campaign finance spending by groups operating under unique designations in our tax code such as section 527.

While I would have liked to cover more groups engaging in electioneering communications, I am pleased that we will have the opportunity to pass significant legislation that will tackle the 527 stealth political organization problem. I worked very hard with my colleagues in both the House and Senate to develop broader legislation. I extend my thanks to Senators MCCAIN, SNOWE, LIEBERMAN, and FEINGOLD, and Representatives HOUGHTON, SHAYS, GRAHAM, MEEHAN, and DOGGETT for their efforts. We explored many possible alternatives, and I believe that we have laid the groundwork for further legislation in this area.

Tonight we will vote on H.R. 4762, language taken from Senator JOHN MCCAIN's legislation, which has already passed the Senate. This legislation requires section 527 organizations, that have gross receipts of more than \$25,000 dollars, to disclose their top donors. Whether or not we agree with the message of any advertisement campaign, I hope we can agree that voters have the right to know who is paying for any campaign-related ad and who is trying to influence their vote. Our Constitution protects every American's right to be heard. Yet today, more than ever, voters are faced with new-style political organizations, operating free from coverage by Federal election law, that are spending millions on campaign ads without having to disclose their donors. The 2000 general election cycle is fast approaching and section 527 political groups are expanding at a rapid pace and could be a dominant force in the 2000 election.

I am convinced this bill will curb some of the most blatant abuses, and will allow the public to know who is supporting these groups that are now operating behind a veil of secrecy. I urge you to join me in supporting H.R. 4762 in an effort to restore integrity to our election process and return the election process to the American people. It is a real step forward, and we should take it.

DEPARTMENTS OF COMMERCE, JUSTICE, AND STATE, THE JUDICIARY, AND RELATED AGENCIES/ APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2001

SPEECH OF

HON. GEORGE R. NETHERCUTT, JR.

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 26, 2000

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 4690) making appropriations for the Departments of Commerce, Justice, and State, the Judiciary, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2001, and for other purposes:

Mr. NETHERCUTT. Mr. Chairman, I have discussed with the gentleman from Kentucky the fact that the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) is conducting an economic mitigation study associated with the Lower Snake River in my congressional district. In addition, NMFS may direct the Corps of Engineers to conduct an engineering study on how to breach the dams.

Language addressing Corps funding for such a study is included in H. Rept. 106-693, the report accompanying the Fiscal Year 2001 Energy and Water Development Appropriations Bill (H.R. 4733). The report states, "The amount provided for the Columbia River Fish Mitigation program does not include funds for engineering and design, or other post-feasibility phase activities, associated with breaching Lower Snake River dams." It is my understanding that it is the intent of the Commerce, Justice, and State, the Judiciary, and Related Agencies subcommittee that no funds are included for NMFS for engineering and design, or other post-feasibility phase activities including economic mitigation studies associated with breaching the Lower Snake River dams.

DEPARTMENTS OF COMMERCE, JUSTICE, AND STATE, THE JUDICIARY, AND RELATED AGENCIES/ APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2001

SPEECH OF

HON. HAROLD ROGERS

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 26, 2000

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 4690) making appropriations for the Departments of Commerce, Justice, and State, the Judiciary, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2001, and for other purposes:

Mr. ROGERS. Mr. Chairman, the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) has yet to release its biological opinion for the Lower Snake River. Ultimately, it will be the Congress that decides whether to breach the Snake River dams. The amount provided in H.R. 4690 does not include funding for engineering and design, or other post-feasibility phase activities including economic mitigation studies, associated with breaching the Lower Snake River dams. I appreciate the Gentleman's concerns on this matter, and thank him for bringing this issue to my attention.